divisional/Zonal and Railway Board's level to ensure proper compliance of the instructions.

Express train between Hyderabad and Chennai via Nadikudi

3498. SHRI YERRA NARAYANA SWAMY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any representation has been received by Railways to introduce one more express train between Hyderabad and Madras via Nadikudi;

(b) if so, details of this representation; and

(c) what steps will be taken by Railways to introduce this new train to meet public demand?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Some representations have been received regarding introduction of a new train between Hyderabad and Chennai via Nadikudi/Extension of 7005/7006 Nagarjuna Express upto Chennai.

(c) Introduction of a new train between Hyderabad and Chennai via Nadikudi has been examined but not found feasible at present due to operational and resource constraints.

Over-night Express train between Visakhapatnam and Madras

3499. SHRI YERRA NARAYANA SWAMY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Andhra Pradesh Government has made any representation for an over-night express train between Visakhapatnam and Madras;

(b) whether any efforts have been made by the Railways to introduce an over-night train on this sector;

(c) if so, the reasons for not introducing an over-night train on this route;

(d) whether there is no over-night train presently operating on this route; and

(e) if so, the steps proposed to meet this demand?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) No, Sir.

(b) 6003/6004 Chennai-Howarh Mail (daily) and 5 non-daily trains viz 6324 Howarh-Trivandrum Express (biweekly), 6310 Patna-Cochin Express (weekly), 5624 Guwahati-Cochin (weekly) 5626 Guwahati-Bangalore Express (biweekly) and 6322 Guwahati-Trivandrum Express (weekly) are providing an over-night service between Visakhapatnam and Chennai. It has been decided to introduce Howrah-Tiruchchirappalli Express (triweekly) in 1998-99 which will provide an over-night service between Chennai-Visakhapatnam in one direction.

(c) to (e) Do not arise.

Filling up of vacancies in Railways arising due to retirement

3500. SHRI JIBON ROY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the vacancies fallen vacant due to retirement have not been filled up; and

(b) if so, as a consequence thereof the existing workers such as the running staff, are forced to work for un-limited hours of duty superseding relieving points and head quarters which causes safety hazards for these safety category workers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) Occurrence and filling up of vacancies is a continuous process and the vacancies occuring due to various reasons including retirement are filled up by recruitment from open market, and by promotion of serving employees etc. While a few vacancies are bound to exist in this continuous process at any given

points of time, the policy of the Govt. is to fill up the vacancies promptly.

(b) In the light of the judgement of the Central Administrative Tribunal, Ernakulam, delivered on 10.1.1992, instructions have already been issued in April, 1992 advising Zonal Railways that "duty at a stretch of running staff" should not ordinarily exceed 10 hours from departure of the train and overall duty from 'signing on' to 'signing off' should not exceed 12 hours save in exceptional circumstances like accidents, floods/ breaches, agitation, equipment failures etc. Implementation of these instructions is monitored at divisional/zonal and Railways Board's levels with a view to ensure proper compliance of the instructions.

Modernisation of Railway stations in Tamil Nadu

3501. SHRI N. THALAVAI SUNDARAM: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have identified railway stations in Tamil Nadu for modernisation; if so, the names thereof; and

(b) the measures Government have taken for their modernisation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) and (b) Modernisation of railway stations is a continuous process and the same is undertaken wherever so warranted due to growth in passenger traffic and changes in traffic pattern, subject to availability of funds. Works in this regard are included in the annual works programme of the Railways.

Details of various major works already taken up in the State of Tamil Nadu are as under:

	Particulars of works	Anticipated cost in lakh Rs.
1.	(a) Chennai Central-Improvements of circulating area by way of covering over Bucknigham canal adjacent of new concourse.	180.00
	(b) Chennai Central-Improvements to architectural feature, remodelling of vegitarian refeshment room, improvement to dadoing in waiting hall, illuminated boards, lighting in concourse and flooring in new concourse.	65.46
	(c) Improvements to circulating area by covering the Buckingham Canal towards south.	90.10
	(d) Provision of washable apron on platforms	15.23
	(e) Extension of platform shelter	17.41
	(f) Chennai Central Suburban Terminal-Conversion of platform No. 14 into island platform etc.	97.11
2.	Madurai Jn. Provision of foot-over-bridge	136.90
	Raising of platform level	17.23
	Second entry & circulating area, improved lighting, waiting hall etc.	49.28
3.	Melamaruvathur —New station building.	16.16
4.	Pattaravakkam —Provision of foot-over-bridge	23.09

In addition to the above various works of modernisation of smaller station have also been taken up at Veppampattu, Katpadi, Tondiarpet, Kavarapettai, Tiruttani, Tiruppur, Coimbatore Jn., Tulukapatti, Tenmalai and Udumalpet.

Guidelines for awarding contracts to run *bookstalls* at railway platforms

3502. SARDAR GURCHARAN SINGH TOHRA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the criteria/guidelines adopted for awarding contracts to run bookstalls at railway platforms;